

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY 23 JANUARY 2002

NOTE: A copy of the report mentioned below has been sent to all members of the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee and other members who have requested it. Further copies are available from Julia Harries, Room 222, County Secretary's Department, County Hall, Hertford. (Telephone: 01992 555563)

PROPOSED CLOSURE OF MUSLEY INFANT SCHOOL, WARE

Executive Members: Robert Gordon and David Lloyd

Local Members: David Beatty and Nigel Copping

The Scrutiny Committee considered a report on a proposal to close Musley Infant School, Ware on 31 August, 2003. Consultation on this proposal commenced on 6 November, 2001 and closed on 31 January, 2002 and the Cabinet will consider the issue on 11 February, 2002.

A consultation document was issued to formal consultees, parents, governors and staff and had been available to the wider community. The document set out the background to the proposal, which principally related to current and anticipated future demand for primary school places in Ware, their impact on recruitment at Musley School and the anomalous place of the school in the local pattern of nursery, infant and junior phases of primary education.

A well attended consultation meeting was held on 3 December, 2001. Discussions with school staff and governors had also been held. The former School Places, Admissions and Commissioning Panel had considered the proposal, at their meeting on 11 December, 2001.

At the conclusion of the consultation exercise, the responses have been made available in the Members' Room, alongside the correspondence received and a summary of the issues raised at the December consultation meeting. The consultation meeting was recorded and the tapes are available from Sarah Nicholls in CSF Planning on 01992 556722.

The Committee received a petition from Friends of Musley Infant School against the proposed closure and a presentation of visual material was also made.

The Committee made the following comments to Cabinet on 11 February 2002:

- that there were a large number of questions regarding relevant information; officers undertook to provide clarification and detail in the report to Cabinet,
- it was recognised that the school provided a very high quality of education to all its pupils,
- there was concern expressed over the impact of transition between schools on pupil education.

The report to Cabinet will be despatched to Members on 1 February 2002 the outcome of the Cabinet meeting will be reported to the County Council on 14 February 2002.

Tanis Kent
Chairman
County Hall
Hertford

23 January 2002